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Reply to: **Tampa, FL**

April 23, 2002

**THREE PLANT CITY RESIDENTS SENTENCED ON TAX CHARGES**

On April 22, 2002, United States District Judge Steven D. Merryday, sitting in Tampa, Florida, sentenced WENDELL MULLIS of Winter Haven, Florida to a term of imprisonment of 8 months, to be followed by a term of three years' supervised release. District Judge Merryday also sentenced CAROL MULLIS, of Winter Haven, Florida to a term of three years' probation and JOHN GEISLER, of Plant City, Florida to a term of three years' probation. He ordered all three defendants to make full and complete restitution to the Internal Revenue Service in the amount of taxes which they owed. The MULLIS family owed \$31,027 and GEISLER owed \$14,653. Judge Merryday also imposed a fine of \$4,000 on defendant WENDELL MULLIS and a fine of \$1,000 on defendant CAROL MULLIS.

All three sentences were the result of the conviction of the defendants on November 6, 2001, pursuant to their pleas of guilty to the crime of conspiracy to defraud the United States for the purpose of impeding and impairing the IRS in the computation and assessment of income taxes, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 371. These charges arose out of the MULLISES' ownership and operation, between 1991 and 1997, of Wyndle's Food Land, a grocery store located in Plant City, Florida.

The charges in this case stemmed from the defendants' actions in falsifying the corporate income tax returns of Wyndle's Food Land and their own personal income tax returns. The defendants failed to report certain sales income from the operation of their business and falsified the amounts of income they reported on the relevant corporate and personal income tax returns.

The charges in this case were investigated by the Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation Division. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Jay L. Hoffer of the Tampa Division.